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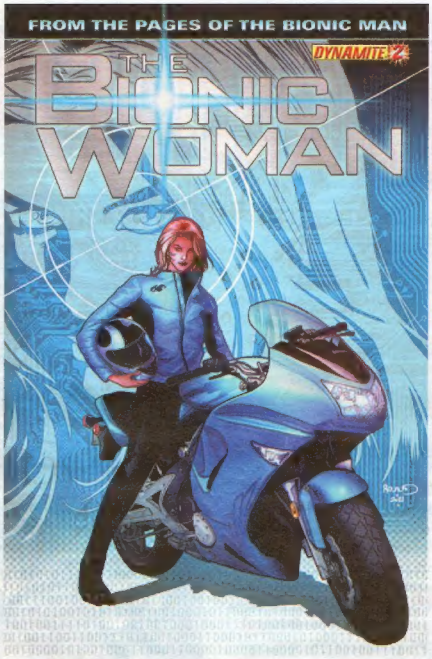
COMIC SHOP NEWS™

THE BIONIC WOMAN

Everything's Better with Bionic On It



2011 saw the debut of ***The Bionic Man,*** the Dynamite series based on acclaimed writer *Kevin Smith's* unproduced film script. Dynamite didn't want Steve Austin to be too lonely, though, so they're giving him company in March, when they add a second Bionic title, ***The Bionic Woman,*** to their line.

Writer *Paul Tobin* offered an introductory primer to ***The Bionic Woman*** to readers whose popular culture knowledge might be weak insofar as 1970s TV series are concerned. "***The Bionic Woman*** is Jaime Sommers. She was a teacher / tennis star who barely lived through a horribly skydiving accident... and the only way to save her life was to replace parts of her body with bionics. She has bionic legs that allow her to run upwards of eighty miles an hour, an arm that gives her amazing strength, and also an ear that allows her to use her hearing *waaay* past normal human abilities. Beyond that, Dynamite and I have slid a few tricks up her sleeves..."

How has Sommers' bionic modification affected her? "It has affected her in the extreme," Tobin said. "One major aspect is that she remembers very little from her past life. Her romances with Steve are just notes that she's read about. Her life as a tennis star, and a teacher... these have been told to her. Old friends? She doesn't remember them. Because of this, she's almost a newborn, in a way. She's just a newborn that has incredible abilities and half the world after her for one reason or another."

So what is Tobin keeping from ***The Bionic Woman*** television series, and what is being discarded? "I'm keeping a lot of it. Most of it, really. That said... she's moved on from that part of her life, so it's more background material—a look at where she comes from," Tobin said. "And in some ways, a look at a simpler life that she wishes she could have back..."

The Bionic Man used Smith's aforementioned script as its basis; was there any similar "guiding document" for ***The Bionic Woman?*** "All the info we needed to start with the character of Jamie Sommers was there in Kevin's initial script," Dynamite editorial director *Joseph Rybandt* said. "From there, we bounced some ideas around internally, then wrangled ***Bionic Man*** writer *Phil Hester* into the mix to make sure what he was going to do with the character jived with what we were going to do with a solo series. Paul was there through it all and came out the other side with a kick-ass take on ***The Bionic Woman*** —better than anything you've ever seen for sure!..."

While the series shares some elements with ***The Bionic Man,*** Tobin stressed that this is a standalone feature, not a supplemental spinoff. "It's definitely set in the same world, and Jaime and Steve Austin definitely cross paths," Tobin said, "but we're trying to keep the storylines separate enough that nobody feels they're missing anything if they haven't yet picked up the other title."

"We're starting ***The Bionic Woman*** with her already upgraded and in the thick of it," Rybandt added. "So, yeah, they're *connected,* but not *interdependent* on each other."

"When Joe and I were talking of how we wanted to go ahead, one aspect we both wanted to stress is that she is very much her own personality, with her own life, not some adjunct to the Bionic Man," Tobin continued. "Because of this, at least for the first story arc, we wanted her to be largely separate from his own current chaos."

There will be sufficient links to make it clear that these books are both part of the same franchise, however. "Steve comes in for an odd visit at one point in the first arc, and OSI (the Office of Strategic Intelligence) is certainly a huge factor in both our storylines. And there are very possibly a few other surprises down the line," Tobin explained.

"It's a small world out there. There can't be very many more super spies than comic book writers, and it seems like I'm always running across my writing friends, hanging out and grabbing cocktails, so chances are the various good guys and bad guys in these comics will probably run into each other as well. Although, in the interests of action and entertainment, they'll probably do a good deal more than grab a beer and talk about panel counts, the way we writers do!" Tobin said with a laugh.

Just how many bionic experiments have there been in Jaime Sommers' world—and will she confront others who have been a part of the program in the past? "I envision an enormous amount of bionic experiments in the past," Tobin replied. "The thing is, there's *no way* the program started out on humans. There had to have been some animal experiments, as well as some failed tries on humans. It simply isn't feasible that the scientists and surgeons developed the bionics from scratch, and got everything right on their first try.

"That leaves a lot of test subjects out there—though not necessarily 'powerful' people. There have to be bionic fingers, bionic feet, bionic hearts, bionic noses... all sorts of oddities that maybe wouldn't make a big difference in an individual. My first storyline really delves into that aspect of OSI, and how some bad guys make trouble around it."

What is the OSI, and how did they develop the funding and capabilities of creating bionic humans? "OSI is the Office of Strategic Intelligence. I suppose its closest to our own real world DARPA (Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency) in nature," Tobin explained. "It's one of those entities where you don't get to walk in through the front door without a damn good reason and a note from someone in high places. It's one of those places with a wide-ranging plan to stay ahead. To stay ahead of *whom*? That's classified. And what do you mean, stay ahead? That's classified. One thing's for sure: some oddities exist at OSI, and tech is the future, and if it *can* be researched... if it *can* be developed... then OSI has a team on the job."

In the decades since ***The Bionic Woman*** was a hit TV series, public attitudes towards governmental medical experimentation, human testing, etc., has become much less approving. Will the new series reflect that change in attitudes? "Well, Jaime herself is not at all pleased at what she's become—or at least the life that was thrust upon her," Tobin said. "Government corporations can do an enormous amount of good, and I think most people realize the truth of that—but they can do so in blundering / blind ways that crush a lot of innocents along the path. Is it worth the cost? Depends on whether you're the one who was helped or crushed, I suppose.

"The OSI of the 1970s was secretive because they didn't want their secrets projects to fall into the wrong hands. The OSI of today is secretive because they don't want the common man to know anything about them, or else their parking lots would be full of crazed protestors, and protestors with some extremely valid arguments, as well."

Does the series touch at all on the ethics of human experimentation? "Softly, at first. But then... yes. Full speed ahead on the questioning of ethics. It's why Jaime is no longer truly associated with OSI, although the nature of who they are means that she and OSI will be forever linked... like it or not."

Will Jamie Sommers confront any recurring villains in long-running story arcs, or will the series present straight-ahead adventure in the style of the original ***Bionic Woman***? "I love the idea of Jaime popping around from adventure to adventure—sometimes in chaos, sometimes living her life, trying to recapture some of what she was and create who she will be," Tobin said. "New friends, new enemies, I think all of this is important in order to keep the title fresh.

"At the same time, having an enemy, *her* enemy, is important to the character as well, and some of this begins to build in the first arc. The thing about doing what Jaime does... well, *everything* comes back to haunt these people, and Jaime is no exception."

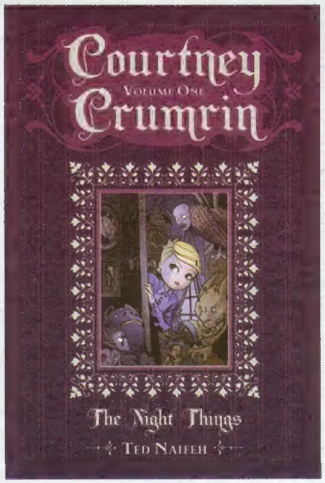
Any plans for a ***Bionic Man/Bionic Woman*** crossover in the future? "There's been talk. The results of that talk are still classified. What's your security level? Can I see your clearance papers?" Tobin joked.

Rybandt wasn't willing to give away any details, but he confirmed that a crossover was on the horizon. "I still remember that TV movie and the immortal 'We've been bionic together for years' line; while we won't be playing that cheesy, the two *do* have a history in this new comics vision and will meet again."

The Bionic Woman #1, a $3.99 Dynamite Entertainment comic by *Paul Tobin & Leno Carvalho,* is scheduled for March release.

by Cliff Biggers

Courtesy your friendly neighborhood comics outlet!



COMIC SHOP NEWSARAMA

Produced by *Comic Shop News* in cooperation with *newsarama.com*

CSNsider

•*Ted Naifeh's* ***Courtney Crumrin & the Night Things*** comics make their color debut in April as Oni Press collects the series in special deluxe hardcover editions that feature an embossed cover, a ribbon bookmark, and a smyth-sewn spine. ***Courtney Crumrin and the Night Things Volume One,*** a 136-page 6" x 9" hardcover priced at $19.99, features coloring by *Warren Wucinich,* produced under *Ted Naifeh's* direction.

•Hermes Press, publisher of the ***Dark Shadows Complete Series*** five-volume hardcover set, is offering a "best-of" volume for readers whose budget (or bookshelves) won't allow for a $250 five-volume hardcover investment. ***The Best of Dark Shadows,*** a hefty 336-page trade paperback collecting almost 30% of the run of the comic book series, will appear in April, one month before the final volume of Hermes' comprehensive reprinting of the entire series.

•Marvel is enlisting pros to turn their comic books into prose, beginning with *Stuart Moore's* adaptation of ***Civil War,*** slated for June release. "Releasing our most acclaimed graphic novels as prose fiction not only allows us to reach a different audience with these stories, but also give us a chance to bring those readers back to the comics that started it all," Marvel SVP—Sales *David Gabriel* said. (DC has found success in the past with licensed novelizations of several of its event storylines over the years, including ***Kingdom Come, Infinite Crisis,*** and ***Final Crisis.)***

•The UK magazine ***Multiverse*** is coming to the US this winter; publisher/editor *Mike Conroy* is working with Ardden Entertainment to tailor the magazine for American reader. ""My goal has always been to produce an entertaining title that occupies the middle ground between the late ***Wizard*** and the moved-to-another-plane Comics Journal," Conroy said. "That is, just straightforward reportage without the hype or the cerebral dissection." The first issue will be priced at $4.99.

•DC has tapped Scottish mystery novelist *Denise Mina* to write its comics adaptation of *Stieg Larsson's* ***Millennium Trilogy,*** beginning with the first of two volumes adapting ***The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo*** in 2012. The entire series will span six graphic novels, with the final volume appearing in late 2012. Mina was reportedly selected by Larsson's estate to adapt the novels; if her name seems familiar to you, it's quite possible that you've seen her work on Vertigo's ***Hellblazer*** comic or her byline on ***A Sickness in the Family,*** a graphic novel published under the Vertigo Crime imprint.

•*Greg Goldstein* has been promoted to President at IDW. "Greg's role as President will allow me more time to focus on new avenues of expansion," IDW CEO & Publisher *Ted Adams* said, "while we continue to elevate our publishing program."

Coming Comics—Marvel in March

The X-Men have lost and the evil Weapon X is more powerful than ever in ***Age of Apocalypse #1,*** a new ongoing by *David Lapham & Roberto De La Torre* set in the Age of Apocalypse continuity.

Spider-Man and the Human Torch are trapped on a space station full of Octo-zombies plummeting toward the Earth in ***Amazing Spider-Man #681*** by *Dan Slott, Chris Yost, & Giuseppi Camuncoli,* as the final stage of Doc Ock's master plan begins. This leads into ***Amazing Spider-Man #682,*** *Dan Slott & Stefano Caselli's* kickoff of "Ends of the Earth," the story arc that finds Doctor Octopus holding the entire Earth hostage... and it may be impossible for anyone to thwart his evil plan!

Marjorie Liu & Mike Perkins debut as the new creative team in ***Astonishing X-Men #48,*** which finds the mutants returning to New York City... but it's *not* a social call.

Brian Bendis & Daniel Acuna present the shocking conclusion to the Norman Osborn/HAMMER storyline in ***Avengers #24.*** Will Osborn's dream finally come true? Find out here!

Then, in ***Avengers #24.1,*** the Vision is back, and it's time for him to make good on his promises. This tale by *Brian Bendis & Brandon Peterson* is the prelude to the Avengers event of the summer.

The Runaways guest-star in ***Avengers Academy #27*** by *Christos Gage & Karl Moline.*

The ***Ultimate Spider-Man*** and ***Brilliant*** creative team of *Brian Bendis & Mark Bagley* do the honors on ***Avengers Assemble #1,*** the in-continuity *Avengers* title featuring Captain America, Thor, Iron Man, Hulk, Hawkeye, Black Widow, and the rest of the cast of this summer's film. The first story arc pits the Avenger against the brand new Zodiac.

In ***Avengers Vs. X-Men #0,*** *Brian Bendis, Jason Aaron, & Frank Cho* lay the groundwork for the upcoming conflict between the Avengers and the X-Men as the Scarlet Witch returns... but what does this mean for the mutant messiah, Hope?

Cable must confront Wolverine and Spider-Man to ensure that the deadly future does not come to pass in ***Avengers: X-Sanction #4*** by *Jeph Loeb & Ed McGuinness.*

Spider-Man meets Captain America in ***Avenging Spider-Man #5*** by *Zeb Wells & Leinil Yu.*

Daken: Dark Wolverine #23 marks the end of the series—and the book goes out with a bang as Daken confronts his father, Wolverine, one final time.

Antony Johnston & Wellington Alves spotlight Matt Murdock's early days in costume in ***Daredevil Season One Premiere HC,*** which also features the Owl, the Purple Man, and Mr. Fear.

The solo ride of the Spirit of Vengeance comes to an end in ***Ghost Rider #9,*** an extra-length series finale by *Rob Williams & Lee Garbett.* Will Johnny Blaze take on the curse of the Ghost Rider and save Alejandra?

What price did Hulk pay to separate himself from Banner, and how far will he go to

SPIDER-MAN
BY STAN LEE & LARRY LIEBER
HAH! THOR WENT TO EARTH IN SEARCH OF SIF—
—AND FOUND THE MORTAL WHO IS HER TWIN!
DON'T YOU ALMOST FEEL YOU COULD TOUCH THOSE STARS, PETER?
SHE SPEAKS STRANGELY—AS IF SHE NE'ER LIVED IN FABLED ASGARD!
STAN LEE LARRY LIEBER 12-26
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make the separation permanent? *Jason Aaron & Whilce Portacio* reveal the answers in ***Incredible Hulk #6,*** which presents the biggest Hulk/Banner fight in Marvel history.

Sam Humphries & Ramon Perez bring *Edgar Rice Burroughs'* second Mars novel to comics in the five-part adaptation of ***John Carter: The Gods of Mars #1.***

Thor takes on Tanarus in *Matt Fraction & Pasqual Ferry's* ***Mighty Thor #12.***

Marvel Adventures Spider-Man #24 and ***Marvel Adventures Super-Heroes #24*** are the final issues of the two all-ages series; Marvel assures readers that new all-ages superhero projects are in the works, though.

As Moon Knight falls deeper and deeper into the abyss of multiple personality disorder, it's up to the Avengers to save him in ***Moon Knight #11*** by *Brian Bendis & Alex Maleev.*

Will one of the Dark Avengers become a new Avenger... and if so, will he have to replace a deceased Avenger? Find out in *Brian Bendis & Mike Deodato's* ***New Avengers #23.***

NEW AVENGERS 23

Chris Yost,Eric Pearson, Luke Ross, & Augustin Padilla present the official prequel to the upcoming Avengers film in ***Prelude to Marvels' The Avengers,*** a four-part miniseries. How will S.H.I.E.L.D. maintain the status quo in a world full of gamma-powered rage monsters, hammer wielding gods, and men in iron suits?

One Avenger dies, another Avenger joins in ***Secret Avengers #24*** by *Rick Remender & Gabriel Hardman.*

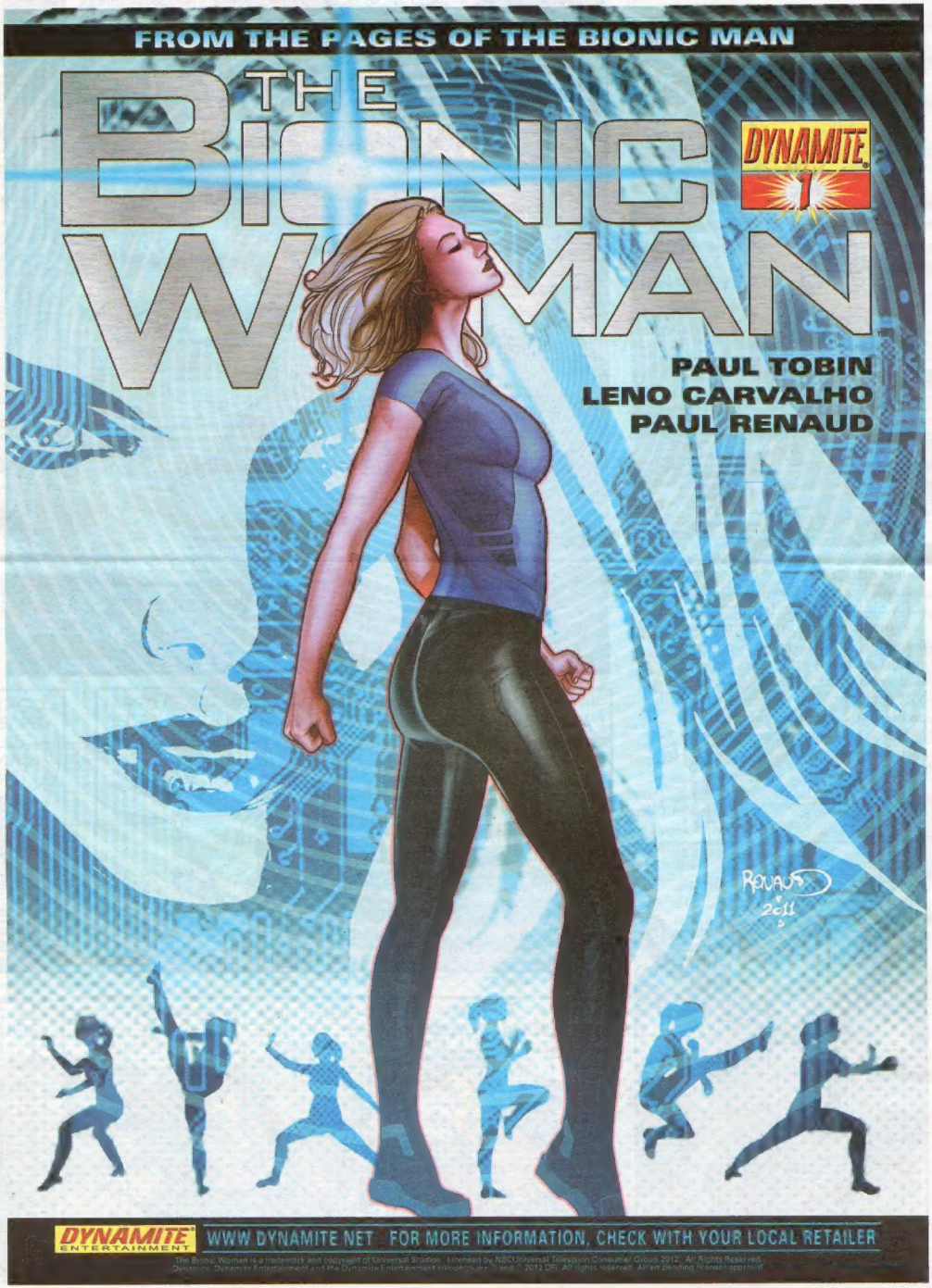
The origin of Marvel's famous webslinger is retold in ***Spider-Man: Season One Premiere HC*** by *Cullen Bunn & Neil Edwards.*

Mark Millar & Leinil Yu follow a super-villain who decides to go global in the Marvel/Icon series ***Supercrooks #1.*** When the US market for super-villainy becomes too competitive, it's time to relocate to Spain!

Woody, Buzz and the gang face off against a playful puppy who loves to gnaw on toys in ***Toy Story #1,*** the first original Disney•Pixar title from Marvel.

The penultimate issue of *J. Michael Straczynski & Chris Weston's* ***The Twelve*** brings the remaining members of the twelve face to face with the killer who's been targeting them.

The Hulk returns in ***Ultimate Comics Ultimates #8*** by *Jonathan Hickman & Esad Ribic.*, and a decision is made that will


FROM THE PAGES OF THE BIONIC MAN
THE BIONIC WOMAN
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PAUL RENAUD
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change the Ultiverse forever.

Nick Spencer & Paco Medina take readers to Camp Angel, the government's mutant solution, in ***Ultimate Comics X-Men #9.*** What secrets about the future of the Ultimate Universe does Colossus hold? Find out here!

Winter Soldier takes on Doctor Doom in ***Winter Soldier #3*** by *Ed Brubaker & Butch Guice.*

Logan, Yukio, & Amiko invade the secret headquarters of the Hand to save the Silver Samurai in ***Wolverine #s 302 & 303*** by *Jason Aaron & Billy Tan*, the finale of the Hand/Yakuza War—and Marvel promises that this finale will forever chance the landscape for Wolverine in Japan.

A pregnant Kitty Pryde, Broo the Broodling, and an army of Bamfs face off against an unstoppable alien foe in ***Wolverine & the X-Men #7*** by *Jason Aaron & Nick Bradshaw.* Plus, Wolverine deals with a problem you *never* thought he'd face...

Havok and Polaris take the reins of X-Factor Investigation in ***X-Factor #233*** by *Peter David & Leonard Kirk.*

The X-Men fight to rescue Jubilee from the hands of her vampire brethren in ***X-Men #26*** by *Victor Gischler & Jorge Molina.*

Dennis Hopeless & Jamie McKelvie offer an updated, streamlined look at the origins of the X-Men in ***X-Men: Season One Premiere HC,*** which pits the X-Men against the Brotherhood of Evil Mutants.

Marvel collected editions (advance solicited for April and May release) include:

- ***Anita Blake, Vampire Hunter: Circus of the Damned Book 2—The Ingenue TP,*** collecting the five-issue miniseries.
- ***Annihilators: Earthfall TP,*** collecting the four-part miniseries.
- ***Astonishing X-Men by Joss Whedon & John Cassaday Ultimate Collection Book 2,*** collecting ***Astonishing X-Men #s 13-24*** and ***Giant-Size #1.***
- ***Avengers Assemble: An Oral History of the Earth's Mightiest Heroes GN,*** collecting the backup features from ***Avengers #s 1-12*** and ***New Avengers #s 1-11.***
- ***Avengers: The Children's Crusade HC,*** collecting the nine-issue limited series and more.
- ***Avengers: Hawkeye—Solo TP,*** collecting ***Avengers Solo #s 1-5.***
- ***Avengers: Legion of the Unliving TP,*** collecting ***Avengers #s 131-1232, 352-354, & Annual #16*** and much more.
- ***Avengers: Mythos HC,*** collecting seven origin oneshots.
- ***Avengers: The Road to the Avengers TP,*** collecting ***I Am Iron Man #s 1 & 2, Public Identity #s 1-3, Captain America: First Vengeance #s 1-4,*** and more.
- ***Avengers: West Coast Avengers Assemble TP,*** collecting ***West Coast Avengers #s 1-4*** and much more.
- ***Captain America: Death of the Red Skull TP,*** collecting ***Captain America #s 290-301.***
- ***Cloak & Dagger: Crime & Punishment Premiere HC,*** collecting Cloak and Dagger tales from the 1980s.
- ***Deadpool Volume 10: Evil Deadpool Premiere HC,*** collecting ***Deadpool #s 45-49 & 49.1.***
- ***Deadpool Volume 8: Operation Annihilation TP,*** collecting ***Deadpool #s 36-39*** and more.

SIF HAS NOT YET SEEN ME, SO I MUST MAKE MYSELF KNOWN.
WOW! MUST BE A GREAT GYM AROUND HERE!
AND LOOKIT THAT SLEDGE-HAMMER!
STAN LEE LARRY LIEBER 12-27
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SIGN MY BOOK FIRST, MJ!
NO— MINE!
I'LL SIGN THEM BOTH...NO NEED TO CROWD.
IT'S GREAT HOW NICE SHE IS TO HER FANS!
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•***Deathlok: The Living Nightmare of Michael Collins Premiere HC,*** collecting the four-part series by *Dwayne McDuffie, Gregory Wright, Jackson Guice, & Denys Cowan.*

•***Elektra by Greg Rucka Ultimate Collection TP,*** collecting ***Elektra #s 7-22*** and more.

•***Essential X-Men Volume 10 TP,*** collecting ***Uncanny x-Men #s 265-272 & Annual #14, New Mutants #s 95-97, X-Factor #s 60-62,*** and more.

•***Fear Itself: Dracula Premiere HC,*** collecting ***Hulk Vs. Dracula #s 1-3*** and more.

•***Fear Itself: Spider-Man Premiere HC,*** collecting the three-issue miniseries and more.

•***Fear Itself: Youth in Revolt Premiere HC,*** collecting the six-part miniseries.

•***Incredible Hulk: Past Imperfect TP,*** collecting ***Hulk #s 21-33 & Annual 2001.***

•***Journey Into Mystery: Fear Itself Fallout Premiere HC,*** collecting ***Journey Into Mystery #s 626.1 & 627-631.***

•***Legion of Monsters TP,*** collecting the four-issue miniseries.

•***Marvel Firsts: The 1970s Volume 2 TP,*** collecting 400 pages of early Marvel appearances of Shang-Chi, Man-Thing, Howard the Duck, the Invaders, and others.

•***Marvel Masterworks: The Avengers Volume 4 TP,*** collecting ***Avengers #s 31-40.***

•***Marvel Masterworks: Marvel Team-Up Volume 2 HC,*** collecting ***Marvel Team-Up #s 12-22 & Daredevil #103.***

•***Official Handbook of the Marvel Universe A to Z Volume 4 TP,*** spotlighting characters beginning with E, F, & G.

•***Secret Avengers Volume 3: Run the Mission. Don't Get Caught. Save the World Premiere HC,*** collecting ***Secret Avengers #s 16-21.***

•***Secret Warriors Volume 6: Wheels Within Wheels TP,*** collecting ***Secret Warriors #s 25-28.***

•***Shattered Heroes HC,*** collecting ***Fear Itself #s 7.1-7.3*** and ***Point One.***

•***Spider-Man: The Graphic Novels HC,*** collecting ***Hooky, Parallel Lives, Spirits of the Earth,*** and ***Fear Itself,*** featuring work by *Charles Vess, Bernie Wrightson, Stan Lee,* and others.

•***Spider-Man: Perceptions Premiere HC,*** collecting ***Spider-Man #s 8-12*** by *Todd McFarlane.*

•***Spider-Man: The Return of Anti-Venom TP,*** collecting ***Amazing Spider-Man #s 663-665*** and more.

•***Thunderbolts: The Great Escape TP,*** collecting ***Thunderbolts #s 163-168 & 163.1.***

•***Ultimate Comics Avengers Vs. New Ultimates: Death of Spider-Man TP,*** collecting the six-issue miniseries.

•***Ultimate Spider-Man Omnibus Volume 1 HC,*** a 1000-page compendium of ***USM #s 1-39 & 1/2.***

•***Ultimate Comics X-Men by Nick Spencer Volume 1 Premiere HC,*** collecting ***Ultimate Comics X-Men #s 1-6.***

•***Uncanny X-Men by Kieron Gillen Volume 1 Premiere HC,*** collecting ***Uncanny X-Men #s 1-4.***

•***Venom by Rick Remender Volume 1 TP,*** collecting ***Venom #s 1-5.***

•***Wolverine: Goodbye Chinatown Premiere HC,*** collecting ***Wolverine #s 17-20.***

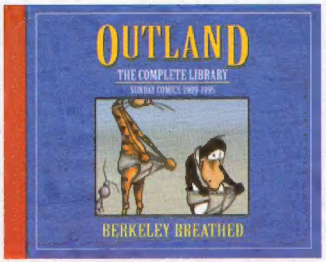
•***Wolverine & Nick Fury: Scorpio TP,*** collecting the 1980s graphic novels by *Archie Goodwin, Tom DeFalco, Howard Chaykin John Buscema, & Shawn McManus.*

•***X-Men: First to Last TP,*** collecting ***X-Men #s 12-15*** and ***Giant-Size #1.***

Coming Comics—IDW in March

Artist *Molly Crabapple* locked herself in a hotel room, covered the walls in paper, and ended up filling 270 square feet of wall with art. Now you can see the results of that manic burst of creativity in ***The Art of Molly Crabapple Volume 1: Week in Hell.***

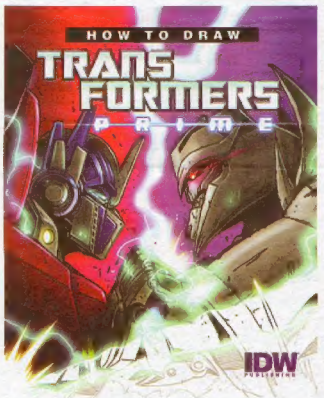
Berkeley Breathed' ***Outland*** is given the deluxe hardcover treatment in ***Berkeley Breathed's Outland: The Complete Collection,*** a 320-page hardcover that includes every ***Outland*** strip ever published, scanned from the original art provided by



Breathed from his personal archives and printed in fullly remastered color. As a bonus, IDW is adding a selection of rarely seen ***Academia Waltz*** strips (the college strip that was a precursor to ***Bloom County,*** which in turn paved the way for ***Outland***).

Joshua Hale Fialkov writes a special arc that begins in ***Doctor Who #15.*** At the onset of World War II, the Silurians' scheme of world domination has come to light—and they want Amy as their queen! Can the Doctor stop the reptilian aliens and their unwitting Nazi allies? (Is there any doubt?...)

Classic Golden Age funny animal material by the incomparable *Frank Frazetta* is collected in ***Frazetta: Funny Stuff HC,*** a 256-page volume with an introduction by *Ralph Bakshi.*



Want some tips on drawing Transformers from an artist who makes a living doing just that? Then ***How To Draw Transformers*** is the book for you, as *Nick Roche* offers step-by-step instructions for the budding illustrator.

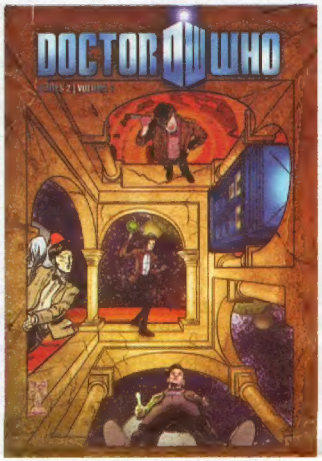
Captain Kirk, Cosmic Boy, and the rest of the timelost Legionnaires and Starfleet officers confront the powerful forces which have unwritten their respective histories in *Chris Roberson, Jeffrey Moy, & Philip Moy's* ***Star Trek/Legion of Superheroes #6.*** But with half of their teams stranded in the past and the other half held prisoner in the future, what chance do they have of overcoming the odds and restoring the worlds they once knew?

IDW invites acclaimed authors *James A Moore, Nancy Collins, Steve Rasnic Tem,* and others to play in the world of ***Zombies Vs. Robots*** in their prose collection ***Zombies Vs. Robots: This Means War,*** which features illustrations by *Fabio Listrani.*

IDW collected editions include:

•***Archie's Sunday Best HC,*** a collection of *Bob Montana* late 1940s/early 1950s color Sunday strips.

•***Classic GI Joe Volume 14 TP,*** collecting Marvel's ***GI Joe: A Real American Hero #s 135-145.***



•***Doctor Who II Volume 3: It Came from Outer Space TP,*** pitting the Doctor, Amy, and Rory against such adversaries as a Cthulhoid space squid, the residents of an alien asylum, and robots who have targeted Santa for destruction.

•***Ghostbusters Volume 1 TP,*** collecting the early issues of the movie-inspired comics series.

•***GI Joe: Snake Eyes Volume 2—Cobra Civil War TP,*** collecting ***Snake Eyes #s 5-8.***

•***Star Trek Volume 1 TP,*** collecting the early issues of the series that reimagines classic ***Star Trek*** episodes set in the alternative timeline created for the *JJ Abrams/Roberto Orci* film.

•***Transformers Volume 7: Chaos TP,*** collecting the storyline that paved the way for the death of Optimus Prime.

•***Transformers Classics Volume 3,*** collecting 276 pages of 1980s ***Transformers*** tales.

•***True Blood Volume 3: French Quarter HC,*** collecting the six-part miniseries.

LEGGO THE PURSE, LADY!
PETER—HELP!
THOSE CREEPS DON'T KNOW WHO THEY'RE MESSIN' WITH!
STAN LEE LARRY LIEBER 12-29
THEY DARE ASSAULT A GODDESS!?
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COMIC SHOP NEWS RED K AWARDS 21st ANNUAL

Believe it or not, another year has come and gone—and with it, another assortment of accomplishments and dubious achievements. Of course, that means that it's time for our once-a-year tribute to the best and worst that the past twelve months have delivered! That's right, here come the ***CSN Red K Awards***, our way of rewarding the most noteworthy—and the most dubious—accomplishments of the past year. (And just like with the fabled Red K of the *Mort Weisinger* Superman era for which the awards are named, our Red K can be unpredictable!)

The "52 Pickup" Award

DC's New 52 Relaunch

It was such a bold gamble that some speculated that DC's decision-makers weren't playing with a full deck: deal out 52 relaunched first issues in the same month, resetting an entire comics universe... not just for an event or for a month or for a miniseries, but for the foreseeable future! And boy, did the gamble pay off! The New 52 relaunch propelled DC to the top of the sales charts, resulting in an unprecedented 52 sellouts and 52 second printings (and in some cases, third and fourth printings as well)! Some lapsed readers returned to the DCnU, some ventured into this brave new world for the first time—but almost everyone found something to get excited about with this historic relaunch.

The "Best Defense" Award

The Defenders

The problem with *The Defenders* is that, up until now, every *Defenders* relaunch was always treated as a B-team project. This time around, though, Marvel is aiming high: a major cast (Doctor Strange, Namor, Silver Surfer, Iron Fist, the Red She-Hulk), a major writer (*Matt Fraction*), and a top-tier artist (*Terry Dodson*). And whaddaya know, we have an A-list *Defenders* book!

"Breaking Up the Band" Award

All-Winners Squad: Band of Heroes

For the first time in many years, a major publisher cancelled a miniseries in mid-storyline, leaving readers wondering how the story wrapped up. Looks like those who invested in the first parts of the story will have to make up their own ending...

The "On the Road Again" Award

Roy Thomas's Conan: The Road of Kings

Before the first issue came to an end, we were back in classic Conan territory again, thanks to *Roy Thomas's* impeccable plotting and storytelling sense. This is the sort of writing that made Conan a star in the 1970s!

The "Never Take Him for Grant-ed" Award

Grant Morrison

The always unpredictable, never disappointing Mr. Morrison made the eccentric ***Batman Incorporated*** storyline positively riveting; then he reinvented Superman in ***Action Comics***, paying homage to both the Golden and Silver Ages without imitating either era. Now if only we could find out what he has planned for *Multiversity*, his DC multiverse epic that's been in the works for many months now.

The "Man Overboard" Award

Stan "The Man" Lee

We keep hearing how Stan is co-creating comics for Boom, for Image, for Archie, for 1821... problem is, co-creating doesn't mean that he's actually *writing* these books so much as he's lending his name and some development ideas. When Stan is on his game and actually *writes* a book, it's noteworthy—otherwise, it's just the creative equivalent of name-dropping.

The "Soaking Up Success" Award

Spongebob Squarepants

Matt Groening and company prove that there are benefits to producing quality stories and art that can be enjoyed by all ages, rather than just churning out a generic "kids' book." We suspect that many parents are enjoying ***Spongebob*** just as much as their kids are!...

The "Making Waves" Award

Aquaman

Geoff Johns & Ivan Reis prove that it's the singer, not the song—assemble an all-star creative team who respect the character, and a long-time B-team player can be elevated to A-team success in short order! If you're still thinking of ***Aquaman*** as B-team material, think again—this is one of the best books of the New 52, and it's the best version of ***Aquaman*** we've seen since the *Steve Skeates-Jim Aparo* era!

The MIA Award

Image United

It didn't start out as a tale years in the making, but apparently that's how this all-star "artist's jam" miniseries is ending up.. if it ever ends at all!

The "Making the Grade" Award

Boom's Valen The Outcast CGC 9.8 Variant

Part of the problem with variants is finding a copy in pristine condition. A collector who is shelling out big bucks for a very limited cover wants to be sure that he gets a book that's worth the cash outlay, after all. Well, Boom found a way to *guarantee* that collectors got a book in the most desirable of conditions: there 1:200 variant was offered *only* in a CGC graded 9.8 edition, and only 25 stores ordered enough to qualify. Maybe more publishers should look into this variant alternative for their upscale ultra-limited offerings...

The "Just Say Neo" Award

Alan Moore's Neonomicon

In spite of all the talk of metafiction and multiple levels of meaning and symbolic dichotomies, ultimately ***Neonomicon*** came across as a throwaway effort from a top talent; unfortunately, it disappointed both fans of Moore and of *H.P. Lovecraft*, whose dream and Chtulhu mythos work supposedly inspired it.

The "Bernie Notice" Award

Creepy Presents Bernie Wrightson

While Dark Horse's *Creepy Archives* series reminds us just how quickly the historic Warren magazine descended into mediocrity, this artist-focused collection separates the pearls from the oyster shells. All of Wrightson's stunning art, in one affordable volume was a great move—now, let's do the same thing for *Wally Wood, Steve Ditko, Al Williamson, Reed Crandall, Neal Adams*, and some of the other all-stars who made ***Creepy*** and ***Eerie*** so cutting-edge in the mid-1960s.

The "Spell of Invisibility" Award

Wizard Magazine

For two decades, fans had come to count on ***Wizard*** for a blend of breaking news, adolescent attitude, pricing info, media happenings,

STOP! LET GO OF ME—FOR YOUR OWN SAKE!
HEY, THAT'S A NEW LINE!
GIVE US THAT PURSE, OR—
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HEY, YOU HEARD THE LADY!
OOOH—I'M REAL TERRIFIED!
STAN LEE LARRY LIEBER 12-30
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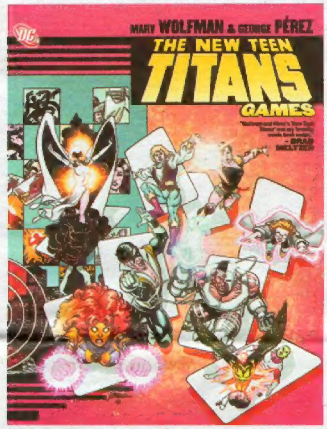
THOU SHOULDST BE!
HUH? ANOTHER CLOWN!

and more... but *Wizard* ended its run in 2011 (following in the footsteps of such other market-leading fan magazines as *Starlog*, *Amazing Heroes*, and *Comics Values Monthly*, all of which had their moments in the sun), leaving the industry without a flagship fan magazine... and without a monthly up-to-date price guide for trending comics. Will 2012 be the year that someone fills the void?

The "Strip Joint" Award

Comic Strip Reprint Volumes

There was a time when the number of quality comic strip reprints could be counted on one hand. Now, though, readers can find comprehensive, high-quality reprints of almost every comic strip of note, from *Pogo* to *Peanuts*, from *Bloom County* to *Bringing Up Father*, from *Flash Gordon* to *Family Circus*. Humor, adventure, human interest—at long last, strips of all types and ages are available, often in a quality package the likes of which we only dreamed of a few years ago...



The "Games People Play" Award

New Teen Titans: Games

More than two decades in the making, this graphic novel reminds us of just how good *Marv Wolfman & George Pérez's New Teen Titans* was. Kudos to DC for not asking these creators to rework their graphic novel to fit into current continuity; instead, we get to revisit that glorious era when *New Teen Titans* owned the top of the sales charts... with good reason!

The "Done and Undone" Award

Fear Itself

Don't blink or you'll miss it—characters who died in the miniseries "un-died" in the "Point-One" followup, major changes were unchanged, and for the most part everything was set to rights as if the series hadn't occurred at all. Isn't that the sort of back-to-where-we-started-from storytelling that soured readers on big events in the past?

The "End of An Era" Award

The Deaths of Jerry Robinson and Joe Simon

The passing of these two comics legends reminds us that the Golden Age gets farther away with every passing year... and now almost all of the Golden Age creative greats who were there from the beginning are gone (thankfully, *Stan Lee* is still very much with us, although he didn't actually make his creative debut until 1941). The only positive angle we can bring to such sad news is that it proves that the comics industry has found sufficient success to outlive its pioneers... but that's bittersweet solace indeed.

The MIA Award Vol 2

Barry Windsor-Smith

One of the industry's most talented illustrators, Windsor-Smith has a number of works supposedly in progress, including a Superman graphic novel, a Thing graphic novel, and a standalone original work, *Monsters*... but it's been more than ten years since his last published comics work, and there's no sign that Windsor-Smith is going to break the dry spell any time soon...

The "TokyoPopped" Award

TokyoPop

Once the 800 pound gorilla of the manga field, TokyoPop ceased publishing in 2011, leaving the market with only one major player: Viz. But even there, the news wasn't all good...

The "Shonen Jumped" Award

Shonen Jump

...Because even Viz's flagship manga magazine announced that it was ceasing publication in early 2011. (Sure, it'll still be available as a digital weekly in 2012, but that's sort of like finding out that your company isn't writing you a paycheck any more, but they're sending you bitcoins instead...)

The "Comic Shop Stomp" Award

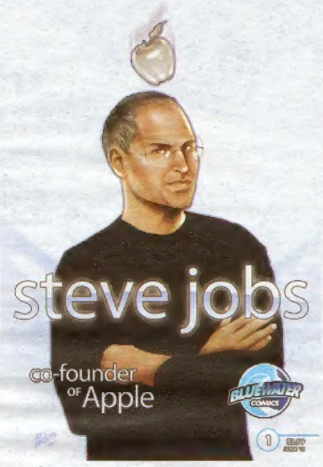
Godzilla: Kingdom of Monsters #1

When IDW offered custom cover art featuring Godzilla stomping on any comic shop that ordered 500 copies of *Godzilla: Kingdom of Monsters #1*, my guess is that they never imagined that 75 shops would take part (with even more signing up for a second printing offering). And comic shops probably never imagined that other copycat publishers would rush to market with their own custom cover configurations.. but none as clever or apropos as the Godzilla offering. (We also suspect that *Eric Powell* never foresaw that many participating shops when he agreed to do an original sketch for every 50 copies ordered... which means that he had to 750 original sketches just for those squished comic shops!)

The "Publishing Is Job One" Award

Steve Jobs: Co-Founder of Apple

Originally solicited for August release, this bio of technological genius *Steve Jobs* would have sold as many as Bluewater could have printed if they had managed to get it by the



time the esteemed Mr. Jobs passed away in early October. Two months later and counting, still no bio comic... thankfully Mr. Jobs and Apple weren't this slow, or we'd be producing *CSN* on an Apple IIe...

The "Comic Book Newspeak" Award

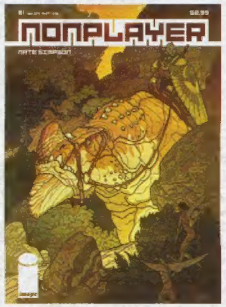
"Self-Covered Comic"

Marvel announced that *Fantastic Four #601* would change to "self-covered" format, which may sound like a benefit until you realize that it means "we give you four fewer pages, take off the heavier-paper outer cover, and print the front cover on what would otherwise be a coverless comic."

The "Non-Existent" Award

Non-Player #2

After a sizzling start, writer/artist *Nate Simpson* dropped out of sight. Eight months later, no *Nonplayer #2*, and no sign of one in the foreseeable future. The first issue was absolutely stunning, but is anyone going to remember it after the better part of a year with no followup?



The "What's In a Name?" Award

Spider-Island

They came *this close* to calling it "Spider-Manhattan"...

The "Sweeet" Award

Sugar and Spike Archives

Sheldon Mayer's cleverly charming tale of toddlers whose gibberish makes perfect sense to one another returns to comic shops after far too long an absence. Now, let's see a *Sugar and Spike Archives Volume 2* in 2012... or better yet, an original all-ages updating of Mayer's ingenious concept!

The "Self X-Planatory" Award

X-Men: Schism

After years of storyline so convoluted that even the most dedicated X-fan had trouble mapping out the plotlines, Marvel gave readers a strong in-continuity X-Men series that actually made sense by itself, even if you hadn't read an X-book in several years. Bravo, Marvel!... Now how about an encore?

And Now... It's your turn!

You've seen our awards—now what accomplishments, near-misses, follies, and/or failures would you like to memorialize? Remedy our oversight with an award of your own! Remember, cleverness counts—and we encourage you to mind your manners and avoid vitriolic vituperation!

E-mail your nominations to

redk@comicshopnews.com

or snail-mail 'em to:

CSN Red K Awards
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Not only will the best reader submissions see print in *CSN*, but we'll choose from among the published entries and award a few special prizes to the lucky winners!

I ORDER THEE— UNHAND HER!
YOU WANNA ROB SOMEONE? FIND YER OWN VICTIM!
BUT IN CASE YOU CAN'T TAKE A HINT—!
STAN LEE LARRY LIEBER 12-31
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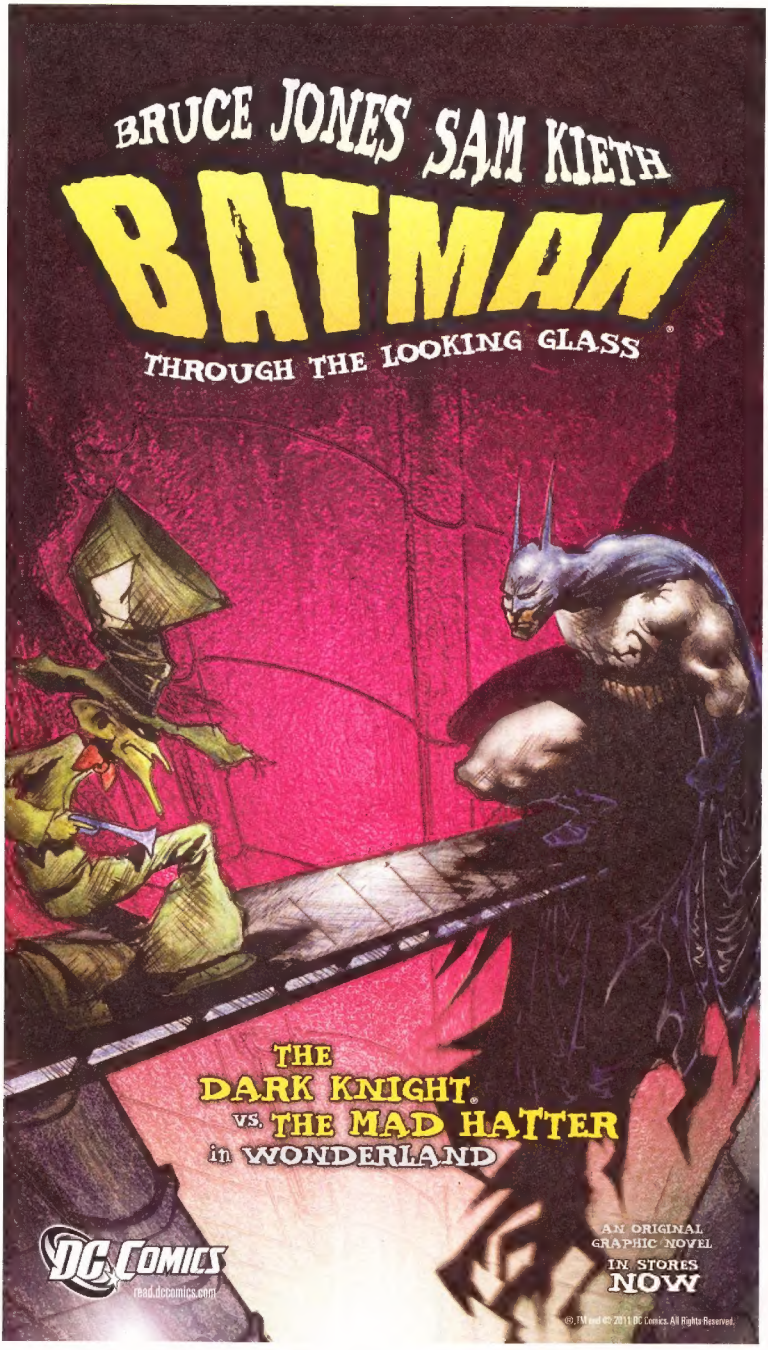
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BATMAN
THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS
THE DARK KNIGHT vs. THE MAD HATTER in WONDERLAND
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